

know. I tried several times to get him to talk about those things, but he would not. The comments we made about his disability were deflected ever so graciously.

He was cheerful and inquisitive. As he continually deflected attention away from his condition, he constantly talked to others about what was important to them. Only one other person, in my opinion, was as good as Tom was in this regard, and his name was Sam Walton, a great man, also.

Tom's mind was both like a sponge and a steel trap. He was a person of good humor. As a young boy he came running into the house one day after having heard an orchestra and said to his mother, "Mom, I just heard a parade sitting down."

Tom became a successful investment banker, and in the context of the language of his profession, he once said that in the marriage corporation that he bought into with his lovely wife, Kera, that his 50 percent shares were all issued non-voting. In discussing his investment in the racehorse business, he stated once that what he found out early was that slow horses ate as much as fast ones.

He was smart and he loved children. My four kids came into contact with Tom in the summer days when they were little. A special time for them was when Tom came over to eat. After dinner he would line up pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters, as well as my kids. He would then ask them history question after history question, deciding on the basis of difficulty as against the age of the child what level the rewards for a correct question might be. His knowledge of history was complete and far-ranging, and my children would be riveted on Tom and his command of the facts of history.

Tom built a constituency, which is a good term for politicians to use, with the people who helped him. He was completely paralyzed. Looking back, it was never a factor to us, but he was completely paralyzed. He could not move anything but his head, so he had to depend on people.

A good friend, after his death, started a list of all the people who pushed Tom's wheelchair, drove his van, typed for him, cooked for him, bathed him, combed his hair, placed calls for him, and other things. Seventy-five names went on the first list, each of those people all becoming his friend and admirer. He always left people better off than they were before—it was an incredible skill and gift.

One of his favorites of the pushers, as we called them, was Jim Rosborough, who is now an assistant basketball coach in the fabulously successful University of Arizona basketball program. He loved to see Jim on television, and Tom talked about him constantly. Jim's letter to me and to others after the funeral showed what Jim thought of Tom and how close and sincere that relationship was.

His politics: He seemed to be a Republican, but he was not a fanatic. On a letter 10 years before I entered poli-

tics he taped a dime to a sheet of paper and sent it to me as my first campaign contribution. He was always giving me advice, and reminding me that he had also elected to the House his close boyhood friend, Tom Railsback.

He was a bumper sticker lover, on his wheelchair, no less, first with mine, but after my election he put Representative RICHARD BURR's bumper sticker on top of mine, never getting my permission, of course. RICHARD was then elected, so Tom could say he elected two of his friends to the House.

He could also lay claim to electing the Honorable JIM LEACH of Iowa to the House. He spoke of JIM in the most respectful terms, and in some of the papers they found after his death this sentence was set out. "Had lunch with JIM LEACH, I am impressed. I will stuff ballot boxes for him whenever necessary." They say that only happens in the South.

Talking to Tom about his relationship with God was a little like talking to him about his polio. Not much did he say, but he lived a great deal of it.

As already stated, He had a relationship with God's son, Jesus Christ, and though he would never say so about his own life, a casual observer could readily see this in his actions. His life was led exactly as the Bible lays it out.

Now why are the three of us standing up here, taking floor time to speak of this man?

Maybe it's because we need to let Tom's life encourage more people, not only people who are disabled, but all people. If the United States—no, the world—could be inhabited by people like Tom Rogers, we would have less problems, we would have a world full of people who would want to work hard to prepare themselves, no matter what the obstacle, to be better each day. We would have more love, we would have more respect for good manners, and just plain decency. We would have more humor and laughter—much needed qualities in a much too serious world.

There's no way a person could know Tom Rogers and not love him and receive love from him.

Here's what he had to say about his life: "My life is close to perfection." "I would not have changed my life for anything."

Reminiscent of Lou Gherig when he stood at Yankee Stadium, his body dying from disease and said, "I consider myself the luckiest guy on the face of the earth!"

On August 24, 1994, my son Ted and I left a contested campaign to go to Tom's funeral, having been to that same church two years earlier, also in the midst of a campaign for his wedding. We went to share the joy the first time and to show respect the second time. The people at his funeral were wonderful folks—laughing, telling stories about Tom and sharing the grief. What a tribute—but what was really significant was that inside the church right up front an orchestra was playing—a parade sitting down—only fitting.

A lot of the same people of Moline will gather in their city tomorrow to have a groundbreaking for the Thomas W. Rogers Visitor's Center on Sylvan Island, an island in the waters of the Mississippi. We hope today to add a little to their tribute and maybe bring a little to the expression of love for Tom that is wrapped up in this event.

Such pleasure in preparing this little talk; it has done me good just to reflect on his life.

The summers will never be the same for me and my family, for we will no longer see Tom on earth, but soon I will see him in Heaven, and he'll look like that strapping 19-year-old that I remember and he will probably say to me, "Dickey—that's the way they talk to people in the North—come on we got things to get done, don't think for a minute we sit still up here."

To join me in their remarks are Tom's good friend Representative JIM LEACH of Iowa and Representative RICHARD BURR of North Carolina.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. DICKEY] has expired.

Mr. DICKEY. I ask unanimous consent for additional time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot entertain that request during the 5-minute period, so the gentleman's time has expired.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, if the three gentlemen present are going to speak about the same gentleman during special orders, I do not have any objection that they can finish their remarks, and then we can come back. I ask unanimous consent that they be allowed to proceed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlemen speaking on the same subject may speak consecutively.

There was no objection.

TRIBUTE TO TOM ROGERS

Mr. BURR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I think what the gentleman from Arkansas, Mr. DICKEY, was about to say, the reason that himself, the gentleman from Iowa, Mr. JIM LEACH, and myself, the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. RICHARD BURR, are here is to talk about a dear friend, to talk about somebody that touched the lives of not only the three of us, but who touched the lives of every person he met.

Mr. Speaker, I did not grow up with Tom Rogers and I was not a peer of Tom Rogers. I was a friend of Tom Rogers. Tom Rogers never met a person, though, that was not a friend. Tom was a unique individual. Tom had a love for life, but he also became friends with every individual he met. Tom loved children. He was fascinated by children and the time they would spend with him as an individual confined to a wheelchair, but that was what was so great about Tom Rogers.

□ 1400

Tom never saw himself confined to a wheelchair. He saw himself as an integral part of everybody's life, an integral part of his community, a family member, somebody who looked at what God had bestowed him with as only another challenge in life and not as a hurdle in life, and Tom was there to overcome that hurdle.